

August 4, 1998

Letter to the Editor (or OP ED piece?)

Recognizing the vital concern that most South Carolinians have for education, I wanted to share the results of a national poll of women recently released by the American Association of University Women.

This poll shows that a vast majority of women across political party lines believes the federal government should play a strong national role in education.

While Congress is trying to block-grant all funds for a large number of elementary and secondary education programs, the AAUW poll shows that women want public money to support public schools **only**.

While Congress is threatening to reduce the role of the federal government in public education, women want just the opposite - 68% of women polled think the federal government is not spending enough on education.

Of the 600 registered women voters ages 18 and older surveyed across the country by Lake, Snell, Perry & Associates for AAUW, women want the following:

- National programs to make schools safe (86%);
- National standards for teachers to ensure a quality education for our children (89%);
- National standards to make sure children learn the basics, like math and reading (84%); and
- Federal programs to give boys and girls the same opportunities in school (90%).

The poll also revealed that women are willing to take their commitment to education to the voting booth: "Eighty percent of women said they are more likely to vote for a member of Congress who supports a national investment in education." Seventy percent would vote against a member of Congress who voted to eliminate the Department of Education and to cut federal funding for schools.

AAUW branches in the midlands and throughout South Carolina are involved in a voter education campaign. Any concerned woman can get information and become involved through an 800 number (800-608-5286) or through the new Two-Minute Activist feature on AAUW's website (www.aauw.org) which allows women to link directly to their members of Congress.

There's a lot at stake for women in 1998, and we must not overlook the power of one vote - yours and mine.

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P.S. I would be happy to have you insert somewhere that I could be contacted for further information.